



Prague – The capital of Czech Republic

Lesson Plan

1) Introduction

- Hand out the text Prague
- Read the text in the class
- Write important information on the blackboard or flipchart

2) Poster

- Divide class in 5 groups.
- Each group will work up one part of Prague:
 - *Royal route*
 - *Hradčany*
 - *Josefov*
 - *Wenceslas Square*
 - *National Avenue*
- Each group takes one large piece of paper and a worksheet
- Pupils read the text
 - Less gifted pupils put the headline and maps (A3 if possible) to the text.
 - Normal pupils write the text about mentioned part and put the photos to the text.
 - Well gifted prepare simple guided through the part.

3) Presentation

- All groups present their work.
- Well gifted pupils make a tour.
- Stick the posters together to make wallpaper. They can put more things to the posters (traffic tickets, postcards, menus.....).



Prague

Prague (Czech: *Praha*) is the capital and largest city of the Czech Republic. Situated in the north-west of the country on the Vltava River, the city is home to about 1.3 million people, while its metropolitan area is estimated to have a population of over 2.3 million. The city has a temperate oceanic climate with warm summers and chilly winters.

Prague has been a political, cultural and economic centre of Europe and particularly central Europe during its 1,100 year existence. For centuries, during the Gothic and Renaissance eras, Prague was the permanent seat of two Holy Roman Emperors and thus was also the capital of the Holy Roman Empire. Later it was an important city in the Habsburg Monarchy and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and after World War I became the capital of Czechoslovakia. The city played major roles in the Protestant Reformation, the Thirty Years' War, and in 20th-century history, during both World Wars and the post-war Communist era.

Prague is home to a number of famous cultural attractions, many of which survived the violence and destruction of twentieth century Europe. Main attractions include the following: Prague Castle, the Charles Bridge, Old Town Square, the Jewish Quarter, the Lennon Wall, and Petřín hill. Since 1992, the extensive historic centre of Prague has been included in the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites.

Prague boasts more than ten major museums along with countless theatres, galleries, cinemas and other historical exhibits. Also Prague is home to a wide range of public and private schools, including the famous Charles University. Its rich history makes it a popular tourist destination and the city receives more than 4.1 million international visitors annually as of 2009. Prague is classified as a global city.

A modern public transportation system connects the city. Prague is also accessible by road, train and air.



Worksheet Nr. 1 – The Royal route

Its name derives from the coronation processions of the Bohemian Kings, starting with George of Podebrady in 1458. The historical path can't be missed by anyone walking in the old centre of Prague as it has been marked with a silvery plate (arrow) that can be seen on the side-walk which wears the inscription "Silver Line".

The Royal route used to link the gates of Old Prague, the Jewish Town, Lesser Quarter and the Prague Castle. The Silver line starts at the Powder Tower in front of the Municipal House and finds its way through Celetna Street down to The Old Town Square.

The Powder Tower is a Gothic tower and one of the old city gates. Dating from 1475, the Powder Tower was built as one of 13 gates to the city of Prague. When construction began it was connected to the royal palace. Before construction was completed, however, King Vladislav Jagellonský moved his residence to Prague Castle in 1485. Nevertheless, the Powder Tower remained important to the Bohemian kings - until 1836 the Bohemian monarchs would pass through the Powder Tower on their way to St. Vitus Cathedral for their coronation.

On Celetna one of the oldest Prague streets stand evidence of the past beautiful historical houses decorated with breathtaking murals and house symbols and facades. The most interesting facades are At the Three Kings, At the White Lion, At the Black Sun and At the Vulture. There is also the Cubist facade on the House of the Black Madonna which dates from 1912.

The Royal route leads into the Old Town Square (Staromestske namesti) then. Besides the well known attractions (The astronomical Clock, the Tyn Church, and the statue of Jan Hus) you can stop for a while and climb the Tower of the Old Town Hall.

Church of Our Lady before Týn

The Church of Our Lady before Týn is a dominant feature of the Old Town and has



been the main church of this part of the city since the 14th century. The church's towers are 80 m high and topped by four small spires.

In the 11th century this area was occupied by a Romanesque church which was built there for foreign merchants coming to the near Týn Courtyard. Later it was replaced by an early Gothic Church of Our Lady in front of Týn in 1256. Construction of the present church began in the 14th century in the late Gothic style under the influence of Matthias of Arras and later Peter Parler. By the beginning of the 15th century construction was almost complete. Only the towers, the gable and roof were missing. The church was controlled by Hussites for some time including John of Rokycan, future archbishop of Prague who became the church's vicar in 1427.

The Astronomical clock

The oldest part of the mechanical clock and astronomical dial dates back to 1410 when it was made by clockmaker Mikuláš of Kadaň and Jan Šindele latter a professor of mathematics and astronomy at Charles University.

Later, presumably around 1490 the calendar dial was added and clock facade decorated with gothic sculptures.

In 1552 it was repaired by Jan Taborský clock-master of Orloj, who also wrote a report on the clock where he mentioned Hanuš as maker of the clock.

The Orloj stopped working many times in the centuries after 1552 and was repaired many times. In the 17th century moving statues were added and figures of the Apostles were added after major repair in 1865-1866.

The Orloj suffered heavy damage on May 7th and especially May 8th 1945 during the Prague Uprising when Germans directed incendiary fire from several armored vehicles and an anti-aircraft gun to the south-west side of the Old Town Square in an effort to silence the provocative broadcasting initiated by the National Committee on May 5th. The hall and nearby buildings burned along with the wooden sculptures on the Orloj and the calendar dial face made by Josef Mánes. The machinery was re-



paired, the wooden Apostles restored by Vojtěch Sucharda and the Orloj started working again in 1948, but only after significant effort.

Jan Hus Memorial

It stands at one end of Old Town Square. The huge monument depicts victorious Hussite warriors and Protestants who were forced into exile 200 years after Hus and a young mother which symbolizes national rebirth. It was unveiled in 1915 to commemorate the 500th anniversary of Jan Hus' martyrdom. The memorial was designed by Ladislav Šaloun and paid for solely by public donations. Born in 1370, Hus became an influential religious thinker, philosopher and reformer in Prague. Hus believed that Catholic mass should be given in the vernacular or local language, rather than in Latin as well as many teachings of John Wycliffe. This did not go over well with the Vatican in Rome and Huss was ultimately condemned by the Council of Constance and burned at the stake in 1415.

Follow the silvery path through the narrow streets down Karlova Street to the famous Charles Bridge. When you pass by the statue of St. John of Nepomuk don't forget to make a wish and touch the statue.

The Charles Bridge

It's a famous historic bridge that crosses the Vltava River. Its construction started in 1357 under the auspices of King Charles IV and finished in the beginning of the 15th century. As the only means of crossing the river Vltava (Moldau) until 1841 the Charles Bridge was the most important connection between Prague Castle and the city's Old Town and adjacent areas. The bridge was originally called the Stone Bridge (*Kamenný most*) or the Prague Bridge (*Pražský most*) but has been the "Charles Bridge" since 1870.

The bridge is 516 meters long and nearly 10 meters wide, resting on 16 arches shielded by ice guards. It is protected by three bridge towers, two of them on the Lesser Quarter side and the third one on the Old Town side. The Old Town bridge tower is often considered to be one of the most astonishing civil gothic-style build-

ings in the world. The bridge is decorated by a continuous alley of 30 statues and statuaries, most of them baroque-style originally erected around 1700 but now all replaced by replicas.

Then the royal route goes up to Lesser Quarter Square and continues through Nerudova Street, another magnificent place of historical Prague.

The most extensive and unforgettable building of the Baroque Era here is the Wallenstein Palace. Albrecht von Wallenstein was a military general-in-chief of Emperor Ferdinand II. Under his order 26 new houses and old gates were built on the freed place. The extensive palace complex with five courtyards and the garden which is set as a French Park.

The Churches are the most frequent and interesting developments on Malá Strana. The finest one and the most prominent is the St Nicholas Church.

The famous statue of the Holy Infant Jesus of Prague is located in the Church of Our Lady Victorious in Malá Strana, Prague.

The famous Czech novelist Jan Neruda was born, lived in and wrote about Malá Strana. Nerudova Street is named after him.



The Powder Tower



Celetná Street



Jan Hus Memorial



Church of Our Lady before Týn



Astronomical clock



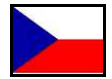
Charles bridge



Neruda Street



Lesser Quarter





Worksheet Nr. 2 – Hradčany

Hradčany is the district of the city of Prague surrounding the Prague Castle.

The castle is said to be the biggest castle in the world at about 570 meters in length and an average of about 130 meters wide. Its history stretches back to the 9th century. St Vitus Cathedral is located in the castle area.

Most of the district consists of noble historical palaces. But there are also many other attractions for visitors: romantic nooks, peaceful places and beautiful lookouts.

Hradčany was an independent borough until 1784 when the four independent boroughs that had formerly constituted Prague were proclaimed a single city. The other three were: *Lesser Quarter*, *Old Town* and *New Town*.

Saint Vitus' Cathedral

It is a Roman Catholic cathedral in Prague and the seat of the Archbishop of Prague. The full name of the cathedral is *St. Vitus, St. Wenceslas and St. Adalbert Cathedral*. Located within Prague Castle and containing the tombs of many Bohemian kings and Holy Roman Emperors. This cathedral is an excellent example of Gothic architecture and is the biggest and most important church in the country.

The present day Gothic Cathedral was founded on 21st November 1344 when the Prague bishopric was raised to an archbishopric. Its patrons were the chapter of cathedral (led by a Dean), the Archbishop Arnost of Pardubice and above all Charles IV, King of Bohemia and a soon-to-be Holy Roman Emperor who intended the new cathedral to be a coronation church, family crypt, treasury for the most precious relics of the kingdom and the last resting place cum pilgrimage site of patron saint Wenceslaus. The first master builder was a Frenchman Matthias of Arras, summoned from the papal palace in Avignon. Matthias designed the overall layout of the building as basically an import of French Gothic: a triple-naved basilica with flying buttresses, short transept, five-bayed choir and decagon apse with ambulatory and radiating chapels. However he lived to build only the easternmost parts of the choir: the ar-



acades and the ambulatory. The slender verticality of Late French Gothic and clear almost rigid respect of proportions distinguish his work today.

After Matthias' death in 1352 a new master builder took over the cathedral workshop. This was Peter Parler at that time only 23-years old and son of the architect of the Heilig-Kreuz-Münster in Schwäbisch Gmünd. Parler at first only worked according to the plans left by his predecessor, building the sacristy on the north side of the choir and the chapel on the south. Once he finished all that Matthias left unfinished, he continued according to his own ideas. Parler's bold and innovative design brought in a unique new synthesis of Gothic elements in architecture. This is best exemplified in the vaults he designed for the choir. The so-called Parler's vaults or net-vaults have double (not single as in classic High Gothic groin vaults) diagonal ribs that span the width of the choir-bay. The crossing pairs of ribs create a net-like construction (hence the name) which considerably strengthens the vault. They also give a lively ornamentation to the ceiling as the interlocking vaulted bays create a dynamic zigzag pattern down the length of the cathedral.

While Matthias of Arras was schooled as a geometer, thus putting an emphasis on rigid systems of proportions and clear, mathematical compositions in his design Parler was trained as sculptor and woodcarver. He treated architecture as a sculpture, almost as if playing with structural forms in stone. Aside from his rather bold vaults, the peculiarities of his work can also be seen in the design of pillars (with classic, bell-shaped columns which were almost forgotten by High Gothic), the ingenious dome vault of new St Wenceslaus chapel, the undulating clerestory walls, the original window tracery (no two of his windows are the same, the ornamentation is always different) and the blind tracery panels of the buttresses. Architectural sculpture was given a considerable role while Parler was in charge of construction as can be seen in the corbels, the passageway lintels and particularly in the busts on the triforium, which depict faces of the royal family, saints, Prague bishops and the two master builders including Parler himself.

Work on the cathedral, however, proceeded rather slowly due to the fact that in the meantime the Emperor commissioned Parler with many other projects, such as the



construction of the new Charles Bridge in Prague and many churches throughout the Czech realm. By 1397 when Peter Parler died, only the choir and parts of the transept were finished.

After Peter Parler's death in 1399 his sons Wenzel Parler and particularly Johannes Parler continued his work. They in turn were succeeded by a certain Master Petrlik who by all accounts was also a member of Parler's workshop. Under these three masters, the transept and the great tower on its south side were finished. So was the gable which connects the tower with the south transept. Nicknamed 'Golden Gate' (likely because of the golden mosaic of Last Judgment depicted on it) it is through this portal that the kings entered the cathedral for coronation ceremonies.

The entire building process came to a halt with the beginning of Hussite War in the first half of 15th century. The war brought an end to the workshop that operated steadily over for almost a century and the furnishings of cathedral, dozens of pictures and sculptures, suffered heavily from the ravages of Hussite iconoclasm. As if this was not enough, a great fire in 1541 considerably damaged the cathedral.

Through most of the following centuries the cathedral stood only half-finished. It was built up to the great tower and a transept, which was closed by a provisional wall. In the place of a three-aisled nave-to-be-built a timber-roofed construction stood and services were held separately there from the interior of the choir. Several attempts to continue the work on cathedral were mostly unsuccessful. In the latter half of 15th century, King Vladislav Jagiellon commissioned the great Renaissance-Gothic architect Benedict Ried to continue the work on the cathedral, but almost as soon as the work began, it was cut short because of lack of funds. Later attempts to finish the cathedral only brought some Renaissance and Baroque elements into the Gothic building, most notably the obviously different Baroque spire of the south tower and the great organ in the northern wing of transept.

In 1844 Václav Pešina, an energetic St Vitus canon, together with Neo-Gothic architect Josef Kranner presented a program for renovation and completion of the great cathedral at the gathering of German architects in Prague. The same year a



society under the full name "Union for Completion of the Cathedral of St Vitus in Prague" was formed, whose aim was to repair, complete and get rid of "everything mutilated and stylistically inimical". Josef Kranner was heading what was mostly repair work from 1861 to 1866 getting rid of Baroque decorations deemed unnecessary and restoring the interior. In 1870 the foundations of the new nave were finally laid and in 1873, after Kramer's death, architect Josef Mocker took over the reconstruction. It was he who designed the west facade in a typical classic Gothic manner with two towers and the same design was adopted, after his death, by the third and final architect of restoration Kamil Hilbert.

In the 1920s the sculptor Vojtěch Sucharda worked on the facade and the famous Czech Art Nouveau painter Alfons Mucha decorated the new windows in the north part of nave. The Rose Window was designed by Frantisek Kysela in 1925-7. This Rose Window above the portal depicts scenes from the biblical story of creation. By the time of St Wenceslas jubilee in 1929, the St Vitus cathedral was finally finished, 600 years after it was begun. Despite the fact that entire western half of Cathedral is a Neo-Gothic addition, much of the design and elements developed by Peter Parler were used in the restoration, giving the Cathedral as a whole a harmonious, unified look.

Prague Castle

In this castle the Kings of Bohemia, Holy Roman Emperors and presidents of Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic have had their offices. The Bohemian Crown Jewels are kept here. Prague Castle is the biggest castle in the world (according to Guinness Book of Records the biggest ancient castle) at about 570 metres in length and an average of about 130 metres wide.

The history of the castle stretches back to the 9th century (870). The first walled building was the church of Our Lady. The Basilica of Saint George and the Basilica of St. Vitus were founded in the first half of the 10th century. The first convent in Bohemia was founded in the castle next to the church of St. George. A Romanesque palace was erected here during the 12th century. In the 14th century, under the reign



of Charles IV, the royal palace was rebuilt in Gothic style and the castle fortifications were strengthened. In place of rotunda and basilica of St. Vitus began building of a vast Gothic church, which has been completed almost six centuries later. During the Hussite Wars and the following decades the Castle was not inhabited. In 1485 King Ladislaus II Jagello began to rebuild the castle. The massive Vladislav Hall (built by Benedikt Rejt) was added to the Royal Palace. There were also built new defence towers on the northern side of the castle. A large fire in 1541 destroyed large parts of the castle. Under the Habsburgs some new buildings in renaissance style appeared here. Ferdinand I built Belvedere, summer palace for his wife Anne. Rudolph II used Prague Castle as his main residence. He founded the northern wing of the palace with the Spanish Hall, where his precious artistic collections were exhibited. The Second Prague defenestration in 1618 began the Bohemian Revolt. During the subsequent wars the Castle was damaged and dilapidated. Many works from the collection of Rudolph II were looted by Swedes in 1648, in the course of the Thirty Years' War. The last major rebuilding of the castle was carried out by Queen Maria Theresa in the second half of the 18th century. Ferdinand V, after abdication in 1848, chose Prague Castle as his home.

In 1918 the castle became the seat of the president of the new Czechoslovak Republic. The New Royal Palace and the gardens were renovated by Slovenian architect Jože Plečnik. Renovations continued in 1936 under Plečnik's successor Pavel Janák.

During the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia during World War II, Prague Castle became the headquarters of Reinhard Heydrich, the "Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia". It is said that he placed the Bohemian crown on his head; old legends say that a usurper who places the crown on his head is doomed to die within a year. Less than a year after assuming power, Heydrich was assassinated.

After the liberation of Czechoslovakia, it housed the offices of the communist Czechoslovak government. During the Velvet Revolution, Alexander Dubček, the leader of Czechoslovakia during the Prague Spring, appeared on a balcony overlooking Wenceslas Square to hear throngs of protesters below shouting "Dubček to the

castle!" As they pushed for him to take his seat as president of the country at Prague Castle, he embraced the crowd as a symbol of democratic freedom.

After Czechoslovakia split into the Czech Republic and Slovakia, the castle became the seat of the Head of State of the new Czech Republic. Similar to what Masaryk did with Plečnik, president Václav Havel commissioned Bořek Šípek to be the architect of post-communism Prague Castle's necessary improvements in particular of the facelift of the Castle's Gallery of paintings.



Prague castle



Saint Vitus' Cathedral



Matthias Gate



Golden Street



Worksheet Nr. 3 – Josefov

Josefov (also Jewish quarter) is a town quarter and the smallest cadastral area of Prague, formerly the Jewish ghetto of the town. It is completely surrounded by Old Town. The quarter is often represented by the flag of Prague's Jewish community, a yellow Magen David (Star of David) on a red field.

Jews are believed to have settled in Prague as early as the 10th century. The first pogrom was in 1096 (the first crusade) and eventually they were concentrated within a walled Ghetto. In 1262 Přemysl Otakar II issued a *Statuta Judaeorum* which granted the community a degree of self administration. In 1389 one of the worst pogroms saw some 1,500 massacred at Easter Sunday. The ghetto was most prosperous towards the end of the 16th century when the Jewish Mayor, Mordecai Maisel, became the Minister of Finance and a very wealthy man. His money helped develop the ghetto. Around this time the Maharal was supposed to create the Golem.

In 1850 the quarter was renamed "Josefstadt" (Joseph's City) after Joseph II, Holy Roman Emperor who emancipated Jews with the Toleration Edict in 1781. Two years before Jews were allowed to settle outside of the city, so the share of the Jewish population in Josefov decreased, while only orthodox and poor Jews remained living there.

Most of the quarter was demolished between 1893 and 1913 as part of an initiative to model the city on Paris. What were left were only six synagogues, the old cemetery and the Old Jewish Town Hall (now all part of the Jewish Museum in Prague and described below).

With only six synagogues, the old cemetery and the Old Jewish Town Hall the Nazi German occupation could have been expected to complete the demolition of the old ghetto. However the area was preserved in order to provide a site for a planned "exotic museum of an extinct race". This meant that the Nazis gathered Jewish artefacts from all over central Europe for display in Josefov.

Currently Josefov is overbuilt with buildings from the beginning of the 20th century, so it is difficult to appreciate exactly what the old quarter was like when it was reputed to have over 18,000 inhabitants.



Franz Kafka 's birthplace



Old – new synagogue



Maisel synagogue



Old Jewish cemetery





Worksheet Nr. 4 – Wenceslas Square

Wenceslas Square (Czech: Václavské náměstí) is one of the main city squares and the centre of the business and cultural communities in the New Town of Prague. Many historical events occurred there and it is a traditional setting for demonstrations, celebrations and other public gatherings. The square is named after Saint Wenceslas, the patron saint of Bohemia. It is part of the historic centre of Prague, a World Heritage Site.

Formerly known as Koňský trh (English: *Horse Market*) for its periodic accommodation of horse markets during the Middle Ages, it was renamed Svatováclavské náměstí (English: *Saint Wenceslas square*) in 1848 on the proposal of Karel Havlíček Borovský.

Less a square than a boulevard, Wenceslas Square has the shape of a very long (750 m, total area 45,000 m²) rectangle in a northwest–southeast direction. The street slopes upward to the southeast side. At that end, the street is dominated by the grand neoclassical Czech National Museum. The northwest end runs up against the border between the New Town and the Old Town.

In 1348, Bohemian King Charles IV founded the New Town of Prague. The plan included several open areas for markets, of which the second largest was the *Koňský trh* or Horse Market (the largest was the Charles Square). At the southeastern end of the market was the Horse Gate, one of the gates in the walls of the New Town.

During the Czech national revival movement in the 19th century, a more noble name for the street was requested. At this time the statue was built and the square was renamed.

On October 28th 1918, Alois Jirásek read the proclamation of independence of Czechoslovakia in front of the Saint Wenceslas statue.



The Nazis used the street for mass demonstrations. During the Prague Uprising in 1945 a few buildings near the National Museum were destroyed. They were later replaced by department stores.

On January 16th 1969 student Jan Palach set himself on fire in Wenceslas Square to protest the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Soviet Union in 1968.

On March 28th 1969 the Czechoslovakian national ice hockey team defeated the USSR team for the second time in that year's Ice Hockey World Championships. As the country was still under Soviet occupation, the victory induced great celebrations. Perhaps 150,000 people gathered on Wenceslas Square and skirmishes with police developed. A group of agents provocateurs provoked an attack on the Prague office of the Soviet airline Aeroflot, located on the street. The vandalism served as a pretext for reprisals and the period of so-called normalization.

In 1989, during the Velvet Revolution, large demonstrations (with hundreds of thousands of people or more) were held here.

National Museum Building

The obvious landmark of Wenceslas Square is at the southeast, uphill end: the 1885–1891 National Museum Building, designed by Czech architect Josef Schulz. The National Museum in Prague was founded on April 15th 1818 with the first president of the Society of the Patriotic Museum being named Count Sternberk, which would serve as the trustee and operator of the museum. Early on, the focus of the museum was centered on natural sciences, partially because Count Sternberk was a botanist, mineralogist and eminent phytopaleontologist, but also because of the natural science slant of the times as perpetrated by Emperor Joseph II of Austria.

The main museum building is located on the upper end of Wenceslas Square and was built by prominent Czech neo-renaissance architect Josef Schulz from 1885 – 1891. Before this the museum had been temporarily based at several noblemen's palaces. With the construction of a permanent building for the museum, a great deal



of work which had previously been devoted to ensuring that the collections would remain intact was now put toward collecting new materials.

The building was damaged during World War II in 1945 by a bomb, but the collections were not damaged because they had been moved to other storage sites. The museum reopened after intensive repairs in 1947 and in 1960 exterior night floodlighting was installed, which followed a general repair of the facade that had taken place in previous years.

During the 1968 Warsaw Pact intervention the main facade was severely damaged by strong Soviet machine-gun and automatic submachine-gun fire. The shots made numerous holes in sandstone pillars and plaster, destroyed stone statues and reliefs and also caused damage in some of the depositaries. Despite the general facade repair made between 1970 - 1972 the damage still can be seen because the builders used lighter sandstone to repair the bullet holes.

Statue of Wenceslas

The mounted saint was sculpted by Josef Václav Myslbek in 1887–1924 and the image of Wenceslas is accompanied by other Czech patron saints carved into the ornate statue base: Saint Ludmila, Saint Agnes of Bohemia, Saint Prokop, and Saint Adalbert of Prague. The statue base, designed by architect Alois Dryák, includes the inscription: "*Svatý Václave, vévodo české země, kníže náš, nedej zahynouti nám ni budoucím*" ("Saint Wenceslas, duke of the Czech land, prince of ours, do not let perish neither us nor our descendants").

In front of St. Wenceslas are two plaques in memory of those killed during the Communist era. One is dedicated to Jan Palach, who set himself on fire in protest at the Soviet invasion.

A memorable parody of this statue, created by David Černý, hangs in a Lucerna Palace gallery near the square.



Lucerna Palace

The buildings around the upper part of Wenceslas Square are interconnected via a system of passages, the most famous of them being the Lucerna (Lantern) Passage. The large passage connects Vodičkova and Štěpánská streets and houses numerous stores and restaurants, a movie theatre, music bar and a prestigious concert hall - the Lucerna Grand Hall.

Lucerna was Prague's first multipurpose complex from the beginning of the 20th century – it is one of the best-known of Prague's cultural 'palaces'.

It was built between 1907 and 1921 after a project by Václav Havel (the grandfather of the former President Václav Havel) and Stanislav Bechyně. The first part of the arcade was officially opened in 1907.

Václav Havel drew on both European and non-European art for inspiration.

This was reflected in the fact that the arcade was formerly known as the 'bazaar'.

The first restaurant facility in Lucerna was YOKOHOMA, a Japanese-style tearoom owned by the traveller Joe Hloucha, which opened in 1909 and was situated on the site of the present pub HOSPODA V LUCERNĚ.

The final part of the project (the tract leading into Štěpánská Street) was completed in 1921. This section houses the Great Hall (designed by Prof. Bechyně), still the venue for many social events, concerts and balls. Behind Lucerna Cinema in the Rokoko Arcade was opened a cabaret in 1915. After the war it became – and still is – a theatre ROKOKO.

The dominant feature of the arcade is a statue of an upside-down horse by the sculptor David Černý, which was installed in 1999. It is 470 cm high and 290 cm long and is made of polystyrene and epoxide resin.



Statue of Wenceslas



Wenceslas Square



National museum



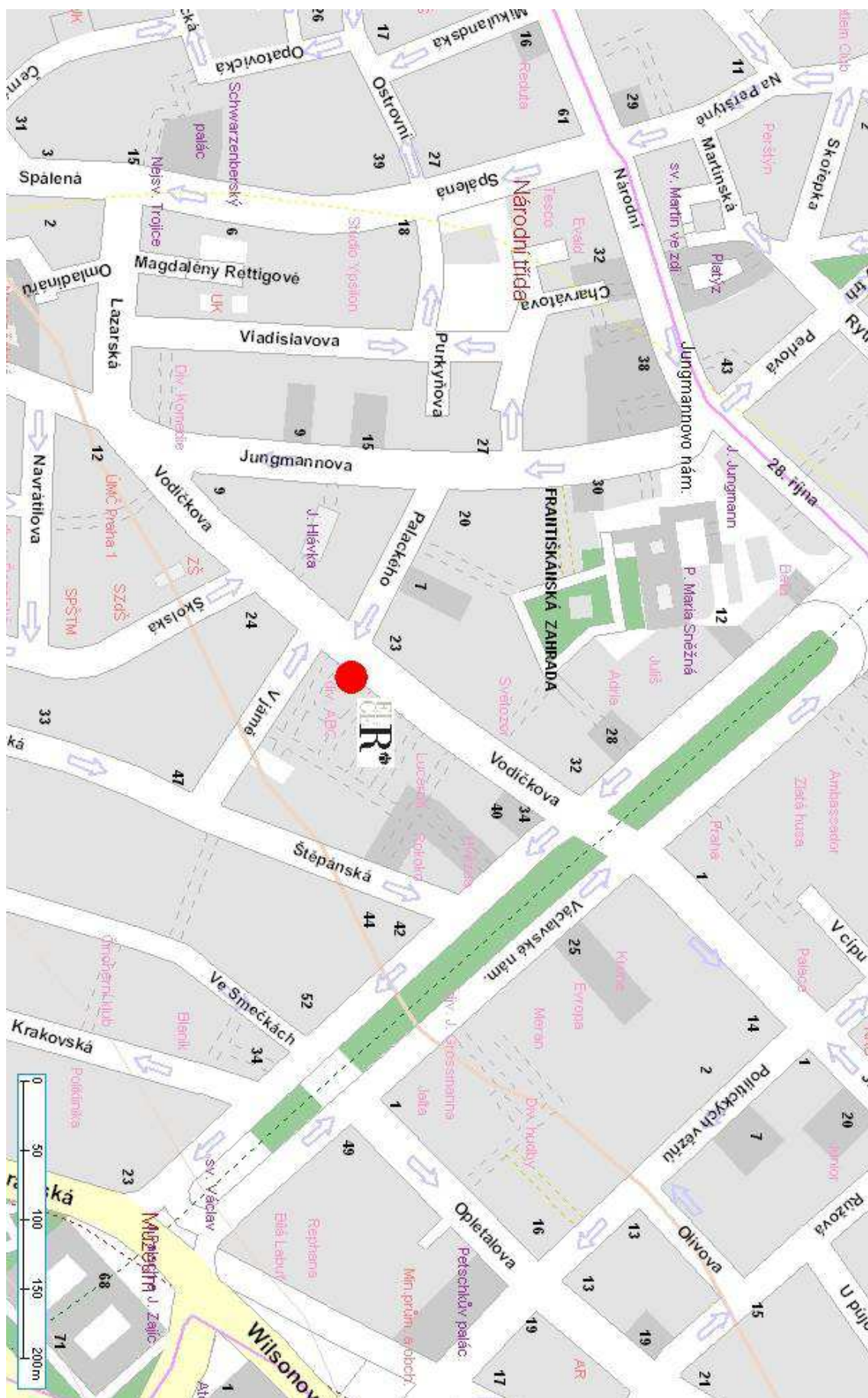
Opera building



Lucerna Palace



Hotel Evropa





Worksheet Nr. 5 – National Avenue

It is placed on the boundary of New Town and Old Town, in the southwest direction from the centre of the city. This avenue connects Most legií bridge with Jungmannovo náměstí. In medieval times there were fortification walls.

In the 1900s the name of the avenue was Nové Aleje (New Avenue, German: *Neue Allee*), but name was changed through the years: V alejích, V nových alejích, V stromořadí, Uršulinská, U Řetězového mostu or Ferdinandova. In the 19th century important buildings and institutions, such as National Theatre, Czech Academy of Sciences were built here.

On November 17th 1989 (Friday), riot police violently suppressed here a peaceful student demonstration, which is thought as initiation of Velvet Revolution. The Národní Třída continued to be an eventful locale during the rest of the Revolution.

The National Theatre (Czech: *Národní divadlo*) is known as the Alma Mater of Czech opera and as the national monument of Czech history and art.

The National Theatre belongs to the most important Czech cultural institutions with a rich artistic tradition which was created and maintained by the most distinguished personalities in Czech society. This tradition helped to preserve and develop the most important features of the nation—the Czech language and a sense for a Czech musical and dramatic way of thinking.

Today the National Theatre consists of three artistic ensembles—opera, ballet and drama—which alternate in their performances in the historic building of the National Theatre, in the Theatre of the Estates and in the Kolowrat Theatre. All three artistic ensembles select their repertoire not only from the rich classical heritage, but in addition to local authors they focus their attention on modern world output.

The National Theatre is the embodiment of the will of the Czech nation for its national identity and independence. Collections of money among the broad masses of the people facilitated its construction and so the ceremonious laying of the foundation stone on



May 16th 1868, was tantamount to an all-state political demonstration.

But the idea of building a dignified edifice to serve as a theatre matured in the autumn of 1844 at the gatherings of patriots in Prague and began to be implemented by an application submitted by František Palacký to the Provincial Committee of the Czech Assembly on January 29th 1845, having requested "the privilege of constructing, furnishing, maintaining and managing" of an independent Czech theatre. The privilege was granted in April 1845. But it was not until six years later – in April 1851 – that the founding Society for the Establishment of a Czech National Theatre in Prague made the first public appeal to start a collection. A year later the proceeds went toward the purchase of land belonging to a former salt works covering an area of not quite 28 acres (11 ha) which determined the magnificent site of the theatre on the banks of the river Vltava facing the panorama of Prague Castle, but at the same time the cramped area and trapezium shape posed challenging problems for the designers of the building.

The era of Bach absolutism brought to halt preparations for the envisaged theatre and supported the concept of a modest provisional building, which was erected on the south side of the theatre parcel by architect Ignac Ullmann and opened on November 18th, 1862. The building of the Provisional Theatre then became a constituent part of the final version of the National Theatre. Its outside cladding is visible to this day in the elevated section of the rear part of the building and the interior layout was only obliterated following the latest reconstruction of the National Theatre in 1977 - 1983. Simultaneously with the realization of this minimal programme asserted by F.L. Rieger and the Provincial Committee, the young progressive advocates of the original ambitious concept of the building (Sladkovský, Tyrš, Neruda, Hálek) launched an offensive. In 1865 these men attained leading positions in the Society and requested the 33-year old professor of civil engineering at the Prague Technical College architect Josef Zíték to draft a design for the National Theatre. He then came out on top in a later-declared open competition and in 1867 construction work began. On May 16th 1868, the foundation stone was laid and in November the foundations were completed. In 1875 the new building reached its full height and in 1877 the theatre was roofed over. As of 1873 there was an ongoing competition for the interior decoration of the building, the sce-



nario of which had been elaborated by a special commission under the leadership of Sladkovský. On the one hand, the themes were in the spirit of the Neo-Renaissance concept of a classic building. On the other hand they were inspired by the current enthusiasm for Slavonic mythology and the stories of the Manuscripts. Both of these concepts were based on Josef Mánes' paintings and connected with the contemporary style of romantic landscape painting (also linked to Czech history). They provided the fundamental ideology guiding artistic expression, which today is described as the art of the generation of the National Theatre.

Academy of Sciences

The Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic was established in 1992 by the Czech National Council as the Czech successor of the former Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. The Academy is the leading non-university public research institution in the Czech Republic. It conducts both fundamental and strategic applied research.

It has three scientific divisions, namely the Division of Mathematics, Physics and Earth Sciences, Division of Chemical and Life Sciences and Division of Humanities and Social Sciences. The Academy currently manages a network of sixty research institutes and five supporting units staffed by a total of 6,400 employees, over one half of whom are university-trained researchers and Ph.D. scientists. The Head Office of the Academy and forty research institutes are located in Prague, the remaining institutes being situated throughout the country.

Velvet revolution

The Velvet Revolution or Gentle Revolution (November 17th – December 29th 1989) was a non-violent revolution in Czechoslovakia that saw the overthrow of the communist government. New movements led by Václav Havel came into being that stood for a united society with a demand that the state politically restructure. The Socialist Union of Youth (SSM/SZM, proxy of Communist Party of Czechoslovakia) organized a mass demonstration to commemorate International Students Day and the fiftieth anniversary of the murder of students by the Nazi government.



Most members of SSM had privately been in opposition to the Communist leadership, but had been afraid of speaking up for fear of persecution. This demonstration gave average students an opportunity to join others and express their opinions without fear. By 16:00, about 15,000 people had joined the demonstration. They walked to grave of Karel Hynek Mácha at Vyšehrad Cemetery and - after the official end of the march - continued into downtown Prague, carrying banners and chanting anti-Communist slogans. At about 19:30, the demonstrators were stopped by a cordon of riot police at Národní Street. They had blocked all escape routes and beat the students. Once all the protesters were dispersed, one of the participants - secret police agent Ludvík Zifčák - kept lying on the street, posing as dead and was later taken away. It is not clear why he did it, but the rumour of the "dead student" was perhaps critical for the shape of further events. That same evening, students and theatre actors agreed to go on strike.

That event sparked a series of popular demonstrations from November 19th to late December. By November 20th the number of peaceful protesters assembled in Prague had swollen from 200,000 the previous day to an estimated half-million. A two-hour general strike, involving all citizens of Czechoslovakia was held on November 27th.

With the collapse of other Warsaw Pact governments and increasing street protests the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia announced on November 28th that it would relinquish power and dismantle the single-party state. Barbed wire and other obstructions were removed from the border with West Germany and Austria in early December. On December 10th President Gustáv Husák appointed the first largely non-communist government in Czechoslovakia since 1948 and resigned. Alexander Dubček was elected speaker of the federal parliament on December 28th and Václav Havel the President of Czechoslovakia on December 29th 1989.

In June 1990 Czechoslovakia held its first democratic elections since 1946.

Café Slavia

Café Slavia is a traditional cafe in the historical centre of Prague that offers Czech and international cuisine. It is aware of the history around us; the National Theater, Charles

Bridge and the Prague Castle. You can see these sights from your table enjoying a cup of hot coffee or a glass of good wine.

Everyday between 17-23 a professional piano player is on stage. This programme is a rarity in Prague.



National Avenue



National Theatre



Academy of Sciences



Café Slavia



Velvet revolution



Memorial of the students demonstrations

